

Government finishes exercise on “restriction-testing declaration” and compulsory testing notice in respect of specified “restricted area” in Jordan

The Government yesterday (April 16) exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to make a "restriction-testing declaration" effective from 11.30pm yesterday, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Jordan (i.e. Parkes Building, 17-23 Parkes Street, Jordan) were required to stay in their premises and undergo compulsory testing. As at 2.30am today, around 80 residents had collected combined nasal and throat swab samples at the temporary specimen collection stations set up in the "restricted area" to undergo a COVID-19 virus test. The exercise finished at around 6.30am. No confirmed cases were found among the residents subject to compulsory testing. Taking into account the above situation, the Secretary for Food and Health revoked the "restriction-testing declaration" in accordance with Cap. 599J (see attachment).

In this exercise, the Home Affairs Department (HAD) (including the Yau Tsim Mong District Office) and the Hong Kong Police Force mobilised around 160 staff to arrange for implementation of the declaration.

The Government thanks all participating government staff and the testing agency for their hard work to arrange for implementation of the declaration within a very short period of time. The Government is also grateful to those subject to compulsory testing for their support and understanding, and their full co-operation during this period in undergoing testing. The Government hopes this temporary inconvenience will cut the local transmission chains as soon as possible and ease residents' worries and fear, so that they will regain confidence in resuming social and business activities in the area, and return to a normal life.

Moreover, the Government issued a compulsory testing notice yesterday, requiring persons who had been present at the above building for more than two hours from April 9 to 16, 2021, even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect, to undergo compulsory testing on or before April 18. The Government reminds relevant persons to receive COVID-19 nucleic acid testing according to the compulsory testing notice.

The Government as a whole is united in fighting against the virus despite all the difficulties, and provided testing for all the residents in the district within a short period of time in the hope of cutting the

transmission of the virus.

The Government will seriously follow up on the compliance situation of the compulsory testing notices and the "restriction-testing declaration" by persons subject to compulsory testing. Any person who fails to comply with the compulsory testing notices commits an offence and may be liable to a fixed penalty of \$5,000. The person will also be issued with a compulsory testing order, requiring him or her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Failure to comply with the order or the "restriction-testing declaration" is an offence and the offender may be liable to a fine of level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.